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a central portion and end portions, said [maid] main body having first, second and third compression areas, said first compression area being centrally positioned to provide controlled force against a support user's sacrum, said second compression having less compression than said first compression area and being positioned on each side of said first compression area and said third compression area having a compression between that of said first and second compression areas.

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 are pending. By this amendment, the specification is amended and claims 1, 5, 28, and 32 are amended. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the indication that claim 5 defines patentable subject matter. By this amendment, claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 5, and claims 10-13 and 27, which depend from claim 5, are allowable.

Claims 1-17 which were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 1 has been amended to clearly recite that the rear surface of the main body includes a plurality of spaced apart ramps and recesses. With respect to claim 14, as disclosed, for example, on page 9, lines 9-18 and Fig. 3, the ramps may have a tether or streamer device 61 connected to them by a conventional method that would be useful to assist in securing the support device to the seat and prevent the support device from moving during use.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 14-17, 19-24, 27-29, 32 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102b over Colonello (U.S. Patent No. 4,752,067). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Although claim 27 was rejected over Colonello, as discussed above, claim 27 depends from claim 5, which was indicated as allowable. Accordingly, as claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form, it is respectfully submitted that claim 27 is allowable.

Claim 1 recites a portable sacral support including a main body having a bottom, a central portion, adjacent side portions and a rear surface, the rear surface including a plurality of spaced-apart ramps and recesses that collectively provide compressive support at a central portion of the main body that is focused upon the sacrum and lesser compression in a release area located adjacent to each side of the central portion that applies less force on muscles adjacent to the sacrum.

Colonello discloses an exercise device 10 for use in exercising the abdominal muscles including a basin portion 12 that is elliptically shaped and sized to receive the user's buttocks and support the pelvis and a lumbar spine support portion 14 extended from the basin portion 12. The basin portion 12 includes a pair of shallowly, concavely curved buttock receiving and supporting areas 22 on opposing sides of an axis of symmetry A-A and a rocker portion 16 that extends below the basin portion as a convex elliptical projection.

As the center of gravity of the user's body lies on or about the second sacral tubercle, the pivot point of the rocker portion 16 is integrally formed in the basin portion 12 to define a contoured projection. Accordingly, a recess 20 is defined in the buttock receiving area of the basin portion 12 that coincides with the location of the rocker projection 16 (column 5, lines 41-49 and Figures 4 and 8). The recess 20 "cradles" the user's tailbone as the buttock receiving areas 22 suspend the bony tailbone over the recess 20, thereby effectively reducing frictional and compression forces commonly encountered in conventional sit-up exercises (column 5, lines 49-53). The transition between the recess 20 and the buttock receiving areas 22 on either side of the recess 20 includes a triangularly shaped mild recess transition that is

in the configuration of a triangle resembling the shape of the sacrum bone (column 5, lines 57-62).

There is no disclosure or suggestion by Colonello of a sacral support, including a main body having a rear surface that includes a plurality of spaced-apart ramps and recesses that collectively provide compressive support at the central portion of the main body that is focused upon the sacrum, as recited in claim 1. As discussed above, Colonello discloses that the recess 20 cradles the user's tailbone, thereby effectively reducing frictional and compression forces, not providing and focusing compressive support on the sacrum. In other words, Colonello discloses the opposite of what is recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Colonello cannot anticipate or render obvious claim 1.

Claim 28 recites a portable sacrum support including a main body provided with at least a central portion including a recess and at least one insert removably placed within the recess.

There is no disclosure or suggestion by Colonello of an insert removably placed within the exercise device 10. In addition, this respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to provide an insert to the exercise device 10 of Colonello because, as discussed above, the recess 20 is intended to cradle the user's tailbone and reduce compressive forces on the user's tailbone. One of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to provide an insert to the recess 20 as it would hinder the cradling function of the recess 20 and would increase, rather than reduce, compressive forces on the user's tailbone. Accordingly, Colonello cannot anticipate or render obvious claim 28.

Claim 32 recites a portable sacral support including a main body having first, second and third compression areas, the first compression area being centrally positioned to provide a controlled force against a users sacrum, the second compression area having less compression than the first compression area and positioned on each side of the first

compression area and the third compression area having a compression between that of the first and second compression areas.

There is no disclosure or suggestion by Colonello of a first compression area being centrally positioned to provide controlled force against a user's sacrum, as recited in claim 32. As discussed above, the recess 20 of Colonello that is located on the axis of symmetry reduces frictional and compression forces and does not provide controlled force against a user's sacrum as recited in claim 32. Accordingly, Colonello cannot anticipate or render obvious claim 32.

Claims 2-4, 14-17, 19-24, 27, 29 and 33 recite additional features of the invention and are believed to be allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 1, 28 and 32 and for the additional features recited therein.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4, 14-17, 19-24, 27-29, 32 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. §102b over Colonello are respectfully requested.

Claims 25 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103a over Colonello. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 25 and 26 recite additional features of the invention and are believed to be allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103a over Colonello are respectfully requested.

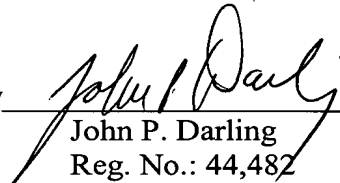
Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 5-13, 18, 30 and 31 define patentable subject matter. However, in view of the above amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better consideration for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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